

AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY SEPTEMBER 11, 2013

AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY SEPTEMBER 4, 2013

CALIFORNIA LEGISLATURE—2013–14 REGULAR SESSION

## Assembly Joint Resolution

**No. 5**

**Introduced by Assembly Member Gomez**

**(Coauthors: Assembly Members Hall, Nazarian, and Rendon)**

**(Coauthors: Senators Padilla and Pavley)**

January 17, 2013

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Assembly Joint Resolution No. 5—Relative to the Los Angeles River.

### LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AJR 5, as amended, Gomez. Los Angeles River: ARBOR study alternative 20.

This measure would urge the United States Army Corps of Engineers to select ARBOR study alternative 20, which would serve to revitalize communities and create a more functional and interconnected watershed that will provide a more diverse regional ecological system and restore the functionality of the Los Angeles River as a critical natural and cultural heritage and community resource.

Fiscal committee: no.

- 1 WHEREAS, The Los Angeles River flows roughly 51 miles
- 2 from its origin in the San Fernando Valley to the Long Beach
- 3 Harbor and is 32 miles long within the City of Los Angeles; and
- 4 WHEREAS, Within the City of Los Angeles, the Los Angeles
- 5 River flows through three United States congressional districts,
- 6 eight city council districts for the City of Los Angeles,
- 7 approximately 20 neighborhood councils, 12 community plan

1 areas, the second largest urban region in the United States, and  
2 one of the world's busiest port regions, and flows into the Pacific  
3 Ocean, the world's largest body of water; and

4 WHEREAS, The Los Angeles River corridor is home to more  
5 than one million people, more than 390,000 housing units, more  
6 than 480,000 workers, more than 35,000 businesses, and more  
7 than 80 schools; and

8 WHEREAS, The Los Angeles River flows through historically  
9 disadvantaged communities and underserved neighborhoods of  
10 Los Angeles that lack open-space resources and have high  
11 unemployment rates; and

12 WHEREAS, The County of Los Angeles, the State of California,  
13 the federal government, and an incredible number of nonprofit  
14 groups and organizations have been invaluable partners in the  
15 process of developing and now implementing the Los Angeles  
16 River Revitalization Master Plan; and

17 WHEREAS, The goals of the Los Angeles River Revitalization  
18 Master Plan include improving environmental quality, improving  
19 public access to the Los Angeles River, increasing recreation and  
20 open spaces, enhancing flood control, encouraging community  
21 reinvestment, and increasing awareness and pride in the Los  
22 Angeles River; and

23 WHEREAS, In 2006, recognizing the environmental degradation  
24 occurring in and along the Los Angeles River within the boundaries  
25 of the City of Los Angeles, the Los Angeles City Council  
26 authorized the Board of Public Works of the City of Los Angeles  
27 to execute an agreement with the United States Army Corps of  
28 Engineers for the Los Angeles River Ecosystem Restoration  
29 Feasibility Study, also known as the ARBOR study, committing  
30 the City of Los Angeles to a ~~50-percent~~ 50-percent share of the  
31 cost as local sponsor. In 2009, the cost increased when the total  
32 ARBOR study cost was raised to \$9,710,000; and

33 WHEREAS, The ARBOR study is consistent with the goals of  
34 President Obama's America's Great Outdoors Initiative, which  
35 includes direction to reconnect Americans, especially children, to  
36 America's rivers and waterways and to build upon state, local,  
37 private, and tribal priorities for the conservation of land, water,  
38 wildlife, and historic and cultural resources, creating corridors and  
39 connectivity across these outdoor spaces, and for enhancing  
40 neighborhood parks. In the President's America's Great Outdoors

1 Initiative, federal agencies are asked to determine how the federal  
2 government can best advance these priorities through public-private  
3 partnerships and locally supported conservation strategies; and

4 WHEREAS, The Los Angeles River watershed was selected as  
5 one of only seven nationwide first-phase pilots of the Urban Waters  
6 Federal Partnership, an implementation piece of President Obama's  
7 America's Great Outdoors Initiative, which aims to stimulate  
8 regional and local economies, create local jobs, improve quality  
9 of life, and protect ~~American's~~ Americans' health by revitalizing  
10 urban waterways in underserved communities across the country  
11 and the ARBOR study was selected as the top priority of the Urban  
12 Waters Federal Partnership in Los Angeles; and

13 WHEREAS, In 2013, the United States Army Corps of  
14 Engineers developed a final array of the four best buy alternatives  
15 for the ARBOR study and only one of those alternatives includes  
16 both significant restoration at the Los Angeles River's confluence  
17 with the Verdugo Wash near the City of Los Angeles's border  
18 with the City of Glendale and the only substantial western bank  
19 connection, providing a profound hydrological link between the  
20 Los Angeles State Historic Park (Cornfields site) and the Los  
21 Angeles River, leveraging a significant investment made by the  
22 State of California toward restoration of the Los Angeles River;  
23 and

24 WHEREAS, The City of Los Angeles endorses the ARBOR  
25 study alternative 20 that results in the most expansive ecosystem  
26 restoration, specifically that which includes the following priorities  
27 for the City of Los Angeles:

- 28 (a) Verdugo Wash Confluence.
- 29 (b) Taylor Yard/Bowtie.
- 30 (c) Taylor Yard/G-2.
- 31 (d) Arroyo Seco Confluence.
- 32 (e) Cornfields Los Angeles State Historic Park.
- 33 (f) Piggyback Yard (Union Pacific Railroad); and

34 WHEREAS, ~~Once complete~~ *completed*, the ARBOR study will  
35 recommend a project that will be cost-shared by the United States  
36 Army Corps of Engineers and local sponsors to modify the river's  
37 concrete channel significantly for the first time since the river was  
38 channelized by the United States Army Corps of Engineers in the  
39 early to mid 1900s. The project will be one of the largest examples

1 of urban ecosystem restoration *in the nation's second most*  
2 *populous city*; now, therefore, be it

3 ~~Resolved, BY THE ASSEMBLY AND THE SENATE OF THE~~  
4 ~~STATE OF CALIFORNIA JOINTLY,~~ That the Legislature urges  
5 the United States Army Corps of Engineers to select the ARBOR  
6 study alternative 20, which would serve to revitalize communities  
7 and create a more functional and interconnected watershed that  
8 will provide a more diverse regional ecological system and restore  
9 the functionality of the Los Angeles River as a critical natural and  
10 cultural heritage and community resource; and be it further

11 RESOLVED BY THE ASSEMBLY AND THE SENATE OF  
12 THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA, JOINTLY, *That the Legislature*  
13 *urges the United States Army Corps of Engineers to select the*  
14 *ARBOR study alternative 20, which would serve to revitalize*  
15 *communities and create a more functional and interconnected*  
16 *watershed that will provide a more diverse regional ecological*  
17 *system and restore the functionality of the Los Angeles River as a*  
18 *critical natural and cultural heritage and community resource;*  
19 *and be it further*

20 *Resolved,* That the Chief Clerk of the Assembly transmit copies  
21 of this resolution to the President and Vice President of the United  
22 States, to the Speaker of the House of Representatives, to the  
23 Majority Leader of the Senate, to each Senator and Representative  
24 from California in the Congress of the United States, and to the  
25 Commanding General and Chief of Engineers of the United States  
26 Army Corps of Engineers.